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homeless"
I would be
Torture now
from
Freedom
have
"If I didn't

www.freedomtorturesupporters.org

The newsletter for Freedom Torture Supporters Issue 83 Spring 2022

survivor

FREEDOM EMPOWERING LIVES
REBUILDING LIVES
TORTURE



Please recycle all items after use
controlled wood.
forests, recycled material and
sources: a mixture of FSC certified
paper produced from responsible
newspaper has been printed on

All articles feature true stories about people you have helped
but names have been changed and models are used in
photographs to protect the identity of survivors.

freedomfromtorture.org
facebook.com/freedomfromtorture
twitter.com/freedomfromtorture

Registered charity number in Scotland: SC039632
Registered charity number: 1000340

For more information about Freedom from Torture
please email info@freedomfromtorture.org or write to
111 Isledon Road, London N7 7JW or call 020 7697 7788
or visit www.freedomfromtorture.org

Freedom from Torture is dedicated to healing and
protecting people who have survived torture. We provide
therapies to improve physical and mental health, we
medically document torture, and we provide legal and
welfare help. We expose torture globally, we fight to hold
torturing states to account and we campaign for fairer
treatment of torture survivors in the UK.



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Sonya Scotts,
Chief Executive

Sonya Scotts

Thank you,

survivors of torture and I am so grateful for that.
Here at Freedom from Torture, supporters like you are
inspirational. Their recovery is proof that with care and
they are from. Their strength is a constant source of
break their silence and feel whole again, wherever
support helps people who have survived torture to
in this edition you can see how your incredible
lives.

torture need to regain their strength and rebuild
that we can provide the expert care survivors of
to feel safe again. It is only thanks to your support
Afghanistan, you have shown that everyone deserves
whether they come from Syria, West Africa, or
Ibrahim whom you can read about in this newsletter.
world they come from. People like Patricia, Jean and
survivors of torture to recover, no matter where in the
make it to safety in the UK. We will continue to help
the rise. We stand ready to offer support to those who
millions flee for their lives, reports of torture are on
have seen distressing headlines of war in Ukraine. As
since the last time I wrote to you in The Survivor, we

Foreword



There's still time to support people like Momo by donating to the Emergency Relief Fund. Visit www.freedomfromtorture.org/TheSurvivor, make a donation using the form included, or phone: 020 7697 7788.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR EVERYONE WHO NEEDS IT

Torture survivors and refugees like Momo often have nowhere to turn when their limited budget has to cover everything from bus fares to clothes and food for the week. Thank you for being there.

Momo said: "If I met supporters today, I will tell them, thank you for everything they are doing for people like me who live in this country without family, who live in this country without hope. I just have to thank them for everything they are doing for us, and God bless, God bless them."

You make such a difference to the lives of torture survivors. You show them that here in UK, we care.

You deserve our compassion and support and your torturers deserve our people who have been through UK systems can feel hostile.

MOMO

"For me, it's helped a lot. Now I can just cook and put it in the freezer, because then I can spend a week without needing to buy things outside. Once I'm hungry, I eat."

Your generous gifts to our latest appeal meant Momo could afford to buy ingredients to make hot meals at a time when he had nothing else.

Supporters like you who generously donated to our Emergency Relief Fund made this happen.

Emergency Relief Fund to cover a week's essentials has now increased from £35 to £40. Thanks to you, the amount survivors receive through our hardest. Your response to our appeal was extraordinary. Further in to crises, as they hit the poorest in our society the recent rising costs of living have pushed people like Momo

forced to live in poverty, not knowing where their relief fund. Many survivors of torture are received vital help through our Emergency

Thanks to your incredible support, hundreds of survivors of torture like Momo have essentials to survivors like Momo who have nowhere else to turn.

In our last appeal, you provided urgent help and basic essentials to torture survivors like Momo who have

EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND APPEAL 2021

Thank you for your emergency donations

We are also excited to launch our online memorial garden, a special website to remember your loved ones and raise funds for torture survivors in their memory. It's easy to set up, write personal messages with access to friends and family worldwide. Contact Emma on [Ema@freedomfromtorture.org](http://freedomfromtorture.org) or call on 020 7697 7810.

OUR FREEDOM GARDEN, IN LOVING MEMORY



Thanks to you, Rashid feels so much better and wanted to share his story. We will be in touch soon with our summer gardening appeal to tell you more about the new plans and how you can help fund places for survivors.

to our 2022

Thanks to you, Rashid feels so much better and wanted to share his story. We will be in touch soon with our summer gardening appeal to tell you more about the new plans and how you can help fund places for survivors.

spending so much time in small flats or bedsits, they were able to make friends and share their pain.

able to get outside in our beautiful and safe grounds after spending so much time in small flats or bedsits, they were able to make friends and share their pain.

therapy to help heal their lives after torture. They were incredible opportunity to receive life-changing Gardening

Thanks to you, Rashid and so many others had this therapy to help heal their lives after torture. They were

We are delighted to announce that, thanks to your support, a new gardening therapy service is about to restart! Unfortunately we had to pause during the pandemic, but soon survivors will be able to participate in garden therapy again.

Sowing seeds of hope for survivors

Our biggest garden therapy group takes place in our main centre in London with an onsite garden and a specialist Horticultural Therapist, Karen, who will be running sessions every week. The newly developed programme consists of a 4 week introduction and grounding course followed by 16 weeks of gardening therapy facilitated by Karen and a horticultural therapist volunteer. The therapy is all set up and ready to go but we still have many extra costs for supplies, travel to get there and interpreters - and many people like Rashidi who fled to the UK alone at just 14 years old to escape the Taliban. After suffering from depression Rashidi joined the group as a totally new way to access therapy. He said "When you are in the garden, you are having a great time and it is very good for your mind, for relaxing. When you talk, whatever you are feeling and whatever you are sharing, you feel a bit more free."





Because of your generosity, Patricia can now feel hopeful again. With your support, she can once again focus on what's important to her. Thank you.

PATRICIA

“Thanks to Freedom from Torture I can travel to therapy sessions. That makes me feel good, because they’re the only places I feel safe.”

When Patrica, 28, spoke out against the corrupt government in her country, she was kidnapped from her workplace, tortured and beaten. She had to leave her whole life behind to escape, but thankfully you helped her.

“If I didn’t have the support from Freedom from Torture now, I would be homeless.”

How you can help

Thanks to your donations, Patricia has received
regular sessions have meant she can begin to heal the scars
of her physical and mental torture.

I was going through a lot of things at the same time. Now I
have someone I can talk with. You're just free to say what's
going through your mind, through your heart. And that's
good. I don't know if I can live without the therapy again,

because it's very helpful for me. The way Maya is there,

she's always there.

Someone like Patricia
can provide half an hour of expert therapy for
someone like Patricia
can help find an emergency payment for a
desstitute survivor

Back home, Patricia was surrounded by extended family. She was an ambitious graduate and a member of one of the most prominent opposition parties in the country, striving for change. She was repeatedly detained, tortured and sexually abused at the hands of state police for several days at a time. The final straw came when she was abducted following this vicious attack, she was forced to leave her home and flee to find safety with her brother in the UK.

Fleeing isn't an easy option. Patricia said "it's more difficult to here, because I can't work, I can't do anything here. In my country, I had my own life". Claiming asylum has been a long, tough process which has left Patricia feeling stressed, anxious and depressed. Your support has meant so much and we could offer welfare guidance and financial support through our Emergency Relief Fund. Patricia said "if I didn't have the support from Freedom from Torture now, I would be homeless".

The first thing Patricia, 28, noticed when she arrived in the UK was just how cold it was. It was winter in London and Patricia had been forced to escape her home country of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a place she remembers fondly. "It's a very hot country and people are so lovely. We love music, we love dancing, we a love party. It's a nice country."

Share this newsletter with your community or with friends and family so they can learn about what refugees face in the UK.



Sign up to receive our latest emails to take part in live campaigns. Simply tick yes, under emails on your donation form.

A blue rounded rectangular button with the word "SIGN UP" in white capital letters. A hand icon with the index finger pointing upwards is positioned above the button.



Facebook and Follow us on Instagram to share our messages of hope – not hostility.

There is always time to tell the government that you welcome refugees and your voice always counts. You can:

MORE INFORMATION

It doesn't matter what we look like or where we come from - we are all human, we all deserve to feel safe. Supporters like you are kind and compassionate and have shown you want to welcome, not punish, people fleeing torture, war and persecution. From families across the UK, to hundreds of organisations, to the House of Lords - people are united against the hate that the Nationality and Borders Bill represents.

Recent news that families have had to flee Ukraine to find safety reminds us that no one chooses to be a refugee. Supporters like you have chosen to respond with compassion. Earlier this year, thousands of supporters like you came together showing their support for refugees and borders Bill. The campaign grew bigger than we could ever imagined with 129 co-signatories from other when you said, no, to the government's cruel Nationality and Borders Bill.

survivors hope that people care, and want to help. organisations and almost 200,000 signatures. It gives people like you, we unfurled a huge banner on Westminister Bridge in London, in view of UK politicians, with some important words. It isn't Ukrainians that need our help – there are people all over the world who are seeking safety from torture, war and persecution who deserve a chance at a better life.

These government decisions are out of step with public opinion. Torture survivors are among those who will be placed at greatest risk of criminalisation and marginalisation in this attack on the rights of refugees. We will continue to campaign for better lives for torture survivors; the best way we can do this is as part of the biggest coalition in British history to defend the rights of all refugees. Thankfully we can rely on supporters like you to show kindness and empathy to refugees and people fleeing torture.

A photograph of three people, two women and one man, holding up a large white sign. The sign features a red circle with a white icon inside, followed by the text "SIGN THE PETITION" and "188,044". The man is on the left, wearing a grey hoodie. The woman in the center is wearing a black top. The woman on the right is wearing a dark top and glasses. They are standing in front of a dark brick wall.

In March, the House of Commons voted to pass one of the cruellest parts of the Nationality and Borders Bill, Clause 11, which will punish people fleeing war and torture, just because they made their own way to safety.

Together we stand with refugees

Regaining strength, reconnection and recovery and recovery through therapy

Emime is a psychological therapist at our London centre, and came to the UK as a refugee. She joined Freedom from Torture 13 years ago and below she shares what a typical day supporting survivors of torture looks like.



Morning - I start my day at 9am. In total I have about 16 clients. On an average day I would see 3 to 4 of them per day in a mixture of online video calls, and face-to-face in-person sessions. During lockdown and the pandemic they had a really hard time psychologically and financially. Sessions are really important for our clients to have in-person sessions. If's really important for our clients to have in-person sessions. For survivors who do not speak fluent English we always make sure we see them with an interpreter so they can talk freely in their own language.

Lunchtime - Morning break - I like to take a coffee break in the

Freedom from Torture garden, in the fresh air, looking at the plants our survivor gardening group have planted. It gives me a nice feeling.

Meeting - We have a weekly team meeting with other clinicians to discuss cases and client progress.

Afternoon sessions - A feeling of safety is very important for survivors of torture. It's important they feel they are welcomed here. It takes some time. Especially for those with children. But our clients are resilient, they don't like to be left sorry for. We are not here to rescue them. We are here to help them to regain their own strength.

I finish my day at 5pm unless I'm on duty cover. That means I receive calls out of hours from clients I can't cover a day -

One interpreter to help them speak freely one cover a therapy session with two specialists staff - one therapist to guide the therapist session with a specialist freedom from Torture therapist like Emine can cover the cost of one face-to-face

E55

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The physical reaction to their trauma. Many clients suffer when hearing police sirens, many can't eat, because this is bad experiences they endured in the past. Often they are not aware they are affected in daily life. For example, therapy is just one way of to reduce the impact of the bad experiences, and these stay with them. Talking journeys, definition and future, each of them has really our clients come to this country following difficult

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapists at Freedom from Torture. In a psychological approach we use a variety of techniques to help survivors like you, we use a variety of

Morning sessions - Because of the generous donations we receive from supporters like you, we use a variety of

therapies at Freedom from Torture, in the fresh air, looking at the plants our survivor gardening group have planted. It gives me a nice feeling.

Bringing my own food from home.

When everyone is in the centre, colleagues and I meet in the staff room and have lunch or coffee together. As therapists, we know how important it is to look after ourselves, as they say, you are what you eat! I usually bring my own food from home.

Lunchtime -

Afternoon - I like to take a coffee break in the

Freedom from Torture garden, in the fresh air, looking at the plants our survivor gardening group have planted. It gives me a nice feeling.

Morning -

Supporting survivors of torture looks like. Torture 13 years ago and below she shares what a typical day and came to the UK as a refugee. She joined Freedom from

that helped to rebuild my life and become useful to the UK society".
Wish more survivors of torture could access the support re habilitation and protection. This is my story and I wish more skills and qualifications. All refugees need for a political reason. We come to the UK with different backgrounds and show governments what you can make valuable skills and qualifications. All refugees need to live in the UK, Jean has finally been able to complete a degree in Sociology and Criminology with Quantitative Methods. After years of therapy and being granted right to live in

UK. For instance, with the problem of street homelessness to look into them to try and change things from the root all over the world, especially in my country and I wanted very specialised subject which looks into the core roots of societal problems. As Jean said "There are many problems of the UK, Jean has finally been able to complete a degree in Sociology and Criminology with Quantitative Methods. After years of therapy and being granted right to live in

trying and that is how I live my life". So I chose to try. All you can do is keep hope by can give up; is we can try every time and one is we struggle in life; one, is we can think about

said to me, "There are only two ways to think about corruption government schemes and work to a more

Luckily, Jean survived and escaped to the UK. He said "I was a broken man but freedom from Torture gave me the confidence to get through what happened. My therapist

As a popular Church Pastor he was seen as a threat to positive, safer future for themselves and their country.

in corrupt government schemes and work to a more work encouraging young people not to get involved

for thousands of children and underprivileged youth

in the DRC Jean wanted to make his country a better

and help the society to get better".

is rehabilitated, it can achieve more share his story. He said "When a life completed his degree, he wanted to

Torture, he was able to attend regular therapy sessions. Now

he has refugee status and has

Thankfully, because of your donations to Freedom from

UK traumatised and broken. He arrived in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) when

leader and church pastor in the 50, was a community

free for his life. He arrived in the

he was tortured and forced to

He was born a refugee, but anyone can become one"



"No one is born a refugee, but anyone can become one"



www.freedomfromtorture.org/giftingourwill

ehamilton@freedomfromtorture.org or visit

Ema Emma Hamilton on 020 7697 7810, email

in your Will or our Free Will Service call

For more information about leaving a gift

really grateful.

are able to support our work in this way we would be
choose to include a gift to Freedom from Torture. If you
solicitors across the UK, and most people who use it
cover the cost of a simple Will through participating
Our Free Will Service is for anyone aged 55 or over. We

FREE WILL SERVICE

keep fighting for a torture-free world.

A Will can help further the causes about which you feel
most deeply. Your values will live on - we promise to
As well as protecting the interests of your loved ones,

relatively privileged."

mother's family were well off so my refugee status was
Occupation and the beginning of the Greek Civil War. My
to England via Egypt in 1945 at the end of the German
family from the island of Chios. He recounted, "we escaped
Greeks was born in 1940, his Mother was an Anglo-

Alexis was born in 1989 and we've been together ever since."

Australia. I came back to the UK in 1987. Alexis and I met at
extensively, including an overland trip and 8 years in
hard life was for them. I left at the age of 19 and travelled
had three small children. Only now do I begin to realise how

accommodation for the next 10 years, by which time they

have pledged a gift in their Will. They share their stories below.
Long-time supporters of Freedom from

support and kindness
Your legacy gift provides sanctuary,

"We both believe in having
towards others as we ourselves
would like to be treated."

Maggie was born in Exeter at the tail end of the Second
World War and said "My parents who were made homeless
in the Exeter Blitz of 1942 had to endure sub-standard

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when we die. Relevant family members involved know and
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them. We all deserve to live with hope and

The gift is for people who will never know us, or we

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The gift is for people who will never know us, or we

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Freedom from Torture to do just that.

the organisation a gift in our Wills because we trust
sanctuary, support and kindness here. We have left

horror in their own countries despite

believe that those who flee unimaginable

Torture for more than 20 years. We

have been supporters of Freedom from

IBRAHIM

“It really helped me a lot.”

that’s not the end of your life.

cool your mind down, You know,

from Torture Encouraged me to

damage in Your mind. Freedom

You. That can be causing more

About the past, what’s wrong with

“I learnt in therapy not to think

because it was a February night.”

So on that night I just slept on the street, but I felt cold

I said, How can I go? I don’t know where I have to go.

He said to me, “Oh, it’s time to close the shop now,”

able to speak the language he asked a shopkeeper for

abandoned by the strangers. Scarred, isolated and barely

forced to leave his wife behind. When he arrived, he was

who took him on a dangerous journey to the UK. He was

Neglected in the country, he would certainly be killed.

Soon after his release he was told by a police officer that

and had cigarettes put out on his body.

tortured. He was held in a cell for many days, beaten

opposition group, and for this Ibrahim was arrested and

is your dad?” His father was a member of a political

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hey were violent and brutal. Ibrahim said, “I was

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and family. One day, the police came

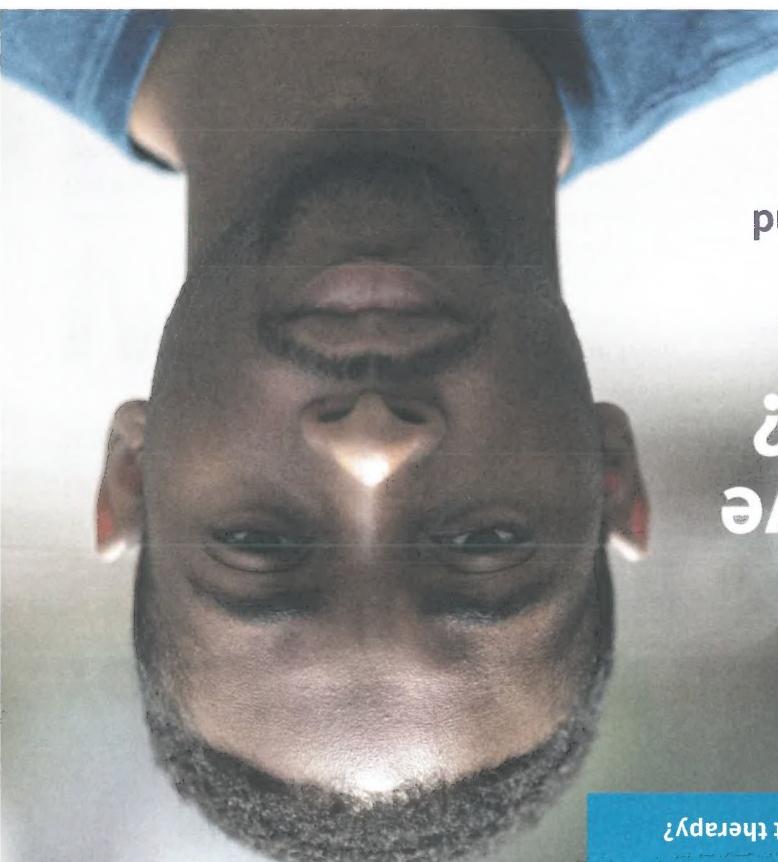
enjoyed spending time with his friends

business with a friend. He had a wife, and

Guinea. Back home, he ran his own

Ibrahim, 26, is a survivor of torture from

Can you help torture survivors like Ibrahim receive specialist therapy?



can cover the cost of one therapy session for someone like Ibrahim across the UK for someone in need of therapy

HOW YOU CAN HELP

vital therapy he needs to recover from his experiences, your donations can help Ibrahim to continue receiving the

still coping I’m not 100%, maybe like 60% more better than before.”

I feel like a normal person now. But even though I am still safe, but I just worry about how long I’ll be – “Now I feel safe, but I just worry about how long I’ll be –

memories of his past.

Even with this support, he still lives with the traumatic

She is helping me a lot.”

therapist is always encouraging me, don’t give up my life. He explained, “For now, it’s helping me because my

to cope day by day with the help from an expert therapist. While things are still very difficult for Ibrahim, he is able

difference.”

Ibrahim said, “Right now, in my life, I feel like I’m secure now and safe. Freedom from Torture makes a very big

reached support from Freedom from Torture for two years.

Your donations mean a lot to Ibrahim. Thanks to you, he has

while Ibrahim, 26, is a survivor of torture from

Guinea. Back home, he ran his own

business with a friend. He had a wife, and

enjoyed spending time with his friends

and family. One day, the police came

knocking on his door.

Ibrahim said, “I was

scared, when they broke the door down, they

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Dates for your diary

South Downs Coastal Walk • Sunday 10 July 2022 - Start time 12pm or 1pm depending on walk
Join our East Sussex supporters group for a choice of three beautiful coastal walks starting in East/Selsey, Eastbourne or East Dean.

more funds by getting sponsors! For more information, email FTFestSussex@gmail.com or check our website at www.freedomfromtorture.org/southdowns

The Doctors' Orchestra Concert
• Monday 19 September 2022 • Cadogan Hall, London, 7:30pm-10:30pm
The annual Doctors' Orchestra Concert is back from Torture! The talented group of doctors will perform Torture! The talented group of doctors will be joined by young virtuoso Simon Zhu. Zhu's exceptional talent has seen him win prizes and tour around the world, including being a prize-winner of the prestigious Menuthin Competition. To buy tickets for this event, please visit www.freedomfromtorture.org/orchestra or call Cadogan Hall Box Office on 020 7730 4500

Chorlton Open Gardens
• Saturday 25 June & Sunday 26 June 2022
• Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester
Visitors range of gardens open each day including community gardens, allotments and a roof garden. Visit a range of gardens open each day including community gardens, allotments and a roof garden. Chorlton Open Gardens

Exile and Healing: An evening of poetry and music
• Wednesday 22 June 2022
• Church of St Mary the Virgin, Church Way, Oxford OX4 4EJ
Join our Oxford supporters group for Exile and Healing, an evening of music and poetry featuring poet, Pat Winslow, and other wonderful award-winning renewable author, Mark Haddon, award-winning links will be provided. For further information contact freedomfromtorture@hotmail.com or visit our website at www.freedomfromtorture.org/exileandhealing

The Great Street Feast
• Wednesday 22 June 2022, 7pm-10.30pm
• BAFTA PICCADILLY, London
Celebrating food and flavours from around the world with survivors of torture and top London chefs. Plus, a celebrity in Conversation with actor Juliet Stevenson and broadcaster Natasha Kaplinsky OBE. To book tickets for this exciting event, please call 020 7697 7812 or turn the page over for more details.

The New Chapter - Freedom from Torture Literary Festival
• Thursday 24 November 2022 • London Library, London, 6:30pm-10:00pm
Freedom from Torture's literary festival is back this year at the London Library. This special evening with feature live readings and performances from best-selling authors, poets and survivors from our Write to Life group, all focused on "The New Chapter". To register your interest for this exciting event and be informed when tickets are on sale please email: events@freedomfromtorture.org

Crossing Over Water Challenge
• Friday 19 August to Wednesday 21 September 2022
Over Water is back this year. We are looking for enthusiastic individuals and groups to choose your own method of crossing over water to honor the dangerous journeys many survivors have to make across water to reach safety. From swimming 5k to kayaking, to walking along a river and crossing each bridge!

Sabine at Smethwick Freedom from Torture
To find out more, or register your interest, email sabine@freedomfromtorture.org or call her on: 020 7697 7749

Tickets are £70 and include all food, wine and entertainment. www.freedomfromtrauma.org/feast
 BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London, W1J 9LN
 Wednesday 22 June 2022, 7pm-10:30pm

TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW!

Book your tickets today. Our Great Street Feast is sure to be an evening you will not forget! All the proceeds from this event will go to funding the baking bread. Survivors are welcome in to a safe space and begin to overcome their trauma using the therapeutic process of survivors are like our therapeutic baking group, where offer. Support like our therapeutic baking group, where specialisit support that only Freedom from Torture can offer. All the proceeds from this event will go to funding the kitchens across London. This exclusive menu is one not to be missed.

Join us for an evening of gourmet street food and entertainment in celebration of Refugee Week 2022. Our award-winning Great Street Feast is returning to London's BAFTA HQ in Piccadilly at 7pm on Wednesday 22 June raising vital funds for survivors. And for the food? Our lineup of culinary talent have curated the ultimate menu of gourmet street food just for you! Chefs include Paul Merrett of Century Club and BBC Saturday Kitchen; Anton Mangano who is bringing a Mauretanian twist to some of the unique ideas from the Ottolenghi Test Kitchen; Cesar Garcia of America from the星星厨师包括世纪俱乐部的保罗·梅雷特和BBC星期六厨房的安东·曼加诺，他们将带来独特的创意美食。

This exclusive event celebrates food and cultures from around the world, and we are so excited to be joined by award-winning actor Juliet Stevenson and broadcaster Natasha Kaplinsky who will be sharing food memories and stories from their illustrious careers on stage and screen.

Top chefs and survivors cook together at the Great Street Feast this summer.

